

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

- 1           1.     An incoming mail monitoring system, said system comprises:  
2                     a plurality of mailers' units that stores unique information contained  
3     in a postal indicia affixed to mail;  
4                     a plurality of receptacles that reads and stores the unique  
5     information contained in the postal indicia before the mail enters the interior of  
6     the receptacle; and  
7                     a data center that receives information stored by the mailers' units  
8     and the receptacles to identify the mailer and assess the possibility of the  
9     presence of life-harming material in the mail.
- 1           2.     The system claimed in claim 1, wherein the receptacle units include  
2     a scanner that reads the postal indicia.
- 1           3.     The system claimed in claim 2, wherein the scanner captures and  
2     interprets the information contained in the postal indicia.
- 1           4.     The system claimed in claim 2, wherein the scanner is located in a  
2     control chamber.
- 1           5.     The system claimed in claim 4, wherein the control chamber has a  
2     locked door for isolating suspect mail.

1           6.     The system claimed in claim 4, wherein the interior of the  
2 receptacle comprises:

3           a inner chamber that receives mail from the control chamber that is not  
4 suspected of having life harming material.

1           7.     The system claimed in claim 6, wherein the inner chamber has a  
2 locked door in which when open mail may be removed from the inner chamber.

1           8.     The system claimed in claim 4, further including a slot for  
2 depositing mail into the control chamber.

1           9.     The system claimed in claim 8, further including:  
2           means for closing the slot when the mail in the control chamber is  
3 suspected of containing life harming substances.

1           10.    The system claimed in claim 8, further comprising means for  
2 indicating a message indicating the status of the receptacle.

1           11.    The system claimed in claim 1, wherein the data center correlates the  
2 recipient address of the mail with unique information contained in the postal  
3 indicia.

1           12.    The system claimed in claim 1, wherein the mailer's unit includes  
2   the time and date that the postal indicia was affixed to the mail in the unique  
3   information contained in the postal indicia.

1           13.    The system claimed in claim 12, wherein the mailer's unit includes  
2   other information regarding the mail piece in the unique information contained in  
3   the postal indicia.

1           14.    The system claimed in claim 13, wherein the data center further  
2   includes:

3                   means for comparing information received from the mailer's unit  
4   with information received from one of the receptacle units.

1           15.    The system claimed in claim 14, wherein the data center further  
2   includes:

3                   means for comparing other information received from the mailer's  
4   unit with information received from one of the receptacle units.

1           16.    The system claimed in claim 15 wherein the receptacle unit  
2   includes:

3                   means for informing the post of possibility of the presence of life-  
4   harming material in the mail.

1           17.    The system claimed in claim 1, wherein the mailer's unit includes  
2 means for automatically transmitting information to the data center at  
3 predetermined intervals.

1           18.    The system claimed in claim 1, wherein the receptacle includes  
2 means for automatically transmitting information to the data center at  
3 predetermined intervals.

1           19.    The system claimed in claim 1, wherein the postal indicia is on a  
2 label that is affixed to the mail piece.

1           20.    The system claimed in claim 1, wherein the postal indicia is printed  
2 on a piece of paper that may be seen through an envelope forming the mail  
3 piece.

1           21.    The system claimed in claim 1, wherein the unique information is  
2 encrypted.

1           22.    The system claimed in claim 1, wherein the unique information is  
2 printed in an area other than the indicia area of the mail piece.

1           23.    The system claimed in claim 1, wherein the mailer's units are digital  
2 postage meter units.

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